

Great Joy!

by Wayne Goff

The New Testament repeatedly teaches us that the coming of the saving Gospel of Jesus Christ and its resultant kingdom is a message of **great joy**! After all, “*gospel*” means “good news,” and having salvation come down from heaven to save sinful man is the best news anyone could ever hear. Imagine remaining in a spiritually lost state where one has no hope and is without God in the world (Eph. 2:12).

There was “joy” at the birth of Jesus Christ into the world (Matt. 2:10; Lk. 1:14). Jesus proclaimed that there is “*more joy in heaven*” over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine who need no repentance (Lk. 15:7).

After the death of Jesus on the cross, the disciples could hardly believe the good news of His resurrection, so Luke records the fact that “*they still did not believe for joy, and marveled*” (Lk. 24:41). Some things just seem too good to be true.

Jesus instructed the twelve apostles about the coming Holy Spirit and what He would do to help them carry out their world-wide mission (Jn. 14-16). He said: “*These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may remain in you, and that your joy may be full*” (Jn. 15:11). An unbelievable task of spreading the true Gospel to the whole world was made possible by the promises and blessings of Jesus.

So when the Gospel began to be preached, and Luke records instances of salvation in the book of Acts, we repeatedly see the results: “*And there was **great joy** in that city*” (8:8); “*...and he went on his way **rejoicing***” (8:39); “*...describing the conversion of the Gentiles; and they caused **great joy** to all the brethren*” (15:3); “*... and he **rejoiced**, having believed in God with all his household*” (16:34).

Joy is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22), and is abiding, absorbing, and eternal. Study the fifty-eight times “joy” appears in the New Testament; and the sixty-nine additional times “rejoice” and its derivatives appear there. It is comforting, encouraging, and consoling to the faithful Christian. “*Now may the God of hope fill you with **all joy** and peace in believing,...*” Rom. 15:13.

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